



CCSSO Announces Four Finalists for 2014 National Teacher of the Year Award

Finalists for Nation's Top Teaching Honor From FL, MD, PA and VA

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WASHINGTON, DC - Today, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) announced that educators from Florida, Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia are finalists for the 2014 National Teacher of the Year. The National Teacher of the Year spends a year representing educators across the country and advocating on behalf of the teaching profession. Outside of their classrooms, the four finalists focus on sharing their knowledge with colleagues through mentorship, staff development and training opportunities to help ensure every teacher is equipped to prepare all of their students for success.

The four finalists for 2014 National Teacher of the Year include:

Dorina M. Sackman, 2014 Florida Teacher of the Year

Dorina Sackman teaches both 8th grade English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) at Westridge Middle School in Orlando, Florida. She has been an ESOL educator for more than 15 years, in elementary, middle and high schools in Florida and Massachusetts. "My passion drives me," Sackman said. "I educate children to communicate in English while celebrating every single one of their cultures. As a result, they too have become fueled by knowledge and armed with a voice." Sackman encourages students to volunteer to help others outside of class through running 5Ks with her for local charities and projects like the student-run Unique Boutique, a donated clothing store for families in need. Sackman serves on the boards of the Foundation for Orange County Public Schools and The Florida Education Foundation. She is also an active member of the Sunshine State TESOL of Florida, the TESOL International Association, and the Orange County Classroom Teachers Association. She has won numerous teaching awards, including the Governor's Shine Award and the Paul Harris Fellow Award. An avid traveler, who speaks five languages, Sackman is also a frequent presenter on staff development related to the Florida Standards and English language learners. A graduate of Siena College in Loudonville, New York with a Bachelor of Arts in French and International Economics, Sackman received a M.A. in Applied Linguistics from the University of Massachusetts, Boston. She also holds a certification in French History, Art and Language from L'Institut Université d'Américain, Aix-en-Provence, France.

Sean McComb, 2014 Maryland Teacher of the Year

Sean McComb is a high school English and AVID teacher at Patapsco High School & Center for the Arts in Baltimore, Maryland. McComb has more than seven years of experience teaching, and is serving this year as a staff development teacher at the school. He also prepares other teachers for the classroom, as an adjunct instructor in education and writing at Towson University. "I work to engage my students and push them to achieve the excellence within them," said McComb. "I expect my students to leave my room better readers, writers and thinkers, but I also hope they leave as better people." McComb has won several awards, including being named a Capital One Community Champion and being recognized by Baltimore County for his outstanding leadership of the AVID College Preparatory Program. He belongs to several professional organizations, including the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), the Association of School Business Officers, and the Maryland State Education Association. McComb holds a B.A. in English Literature and a Masters of Education in English Literature from the University of Pittsburgh. He also holds a Certificate in School Improvement Leadership from Goucher College.

Ryan Devlin, 2014 Pennsylvania Teacher of the Year

Ryan Devlin is an 11th-grade English and 9-12th-grade technology teacher at Brockway Area Junior/Senior High School in Brockway, Pennsylvania, where he has taught for seven years and serves as head of the English department. Devlin also serves as the school's head cross country coach and the senior high gifted advisor. He is an active member of the Pennsylvania State Education Association, National Education Association, and the Brockway Area Education Association. Outside of school, he frequently speaks at state conferences and college campuses and is a cooperating teacher for Clarion University's student teaching program. Devlin also helped write Pennsylvania's new Core Standards English Language Arts Curriculum and over the years has won multiple grants

for his innovative use of technology in the classroom. "Today's children will indeed become tomorrow's leaders, so we must teach them ways to find creative solutions to complex problems through collaborating with others and making the best use of technology," Devlin said. With a B.A. in secondary English education from Waynesburg University and a Master's in Educational Leadership from California University of Pennsylvania, Devlin also holds teaching certificates in English (grades 7-12), business/computers (grades K-12), and library science (grades K-12).

Melissa Ann Porfirio, 2014 Virginia Teacher of the Year

Melissa Ann Porfirio is a first grade teacher at Crestwood Elementary School in Springfield, Virginia with more than eight years' teaching experience. "My personal mission is to better understand the whole child," Porfirio said. "I am committed to creating a classroom community that supports students' learning and maximum potential." A member of the Fairfax County Federation of Teachers, she has received several awards, including the Virginia Teachers of Promise Award and the Educational Testing Service (ETS) Recognition of Excellence. Porfirio is involved in staff development training through her role as cohort facilitator and committee chair for responsive classroom training, and as a mentor to two first-year teachers. She is a graduate of The Catholic University of America with a B.A. in social work, and also holds an M.A. of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from George Mason University.

The National Teacher of the Year Program is run by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Every year states select a teacher of the year to participate in the National Teacher of the Year Program. A panel convened by CCSSO, representing [15 national education organizations](#), chose the four finalists from the 2014 state teachers of the year. The selection committee will personally interview each finalist before selecting the National Teacher of the Year, to be announced in April by CCSSO. The President of the United States recognizes the National Teacher of the Year in a White House ceremony.

Learn more about the National Teacher of the Year program [here](#).